

**IN THE DRAWINGS:**

*Kindly add the following new drawing Fig. 3 which is attached on a separate sheet hereto.*

Attachment: New Sheet

## **REMARKS**

Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in light following remarks, wherein Claim 1 has been amended. Claims 1- 22 are currently pending in this application.

As an initial matter, the Examiner indicates that one of the references submitted in the Information Disclosure Statement was not considered, as the patentee did not match the patentee listed on the patent number. Applicant notes that there was an error in the patent number, and Applicant is resubmitting an Information Disclosure Statement listing U.S. Patent No. 4,035,872, for consideration by the Examiner. The Examiner is respectfully requested to return an initialed copy showing that the reference was considered.

As an initial matter, the drawings stand objected to for failing to show all elements specified in the claims. As a result, a new Fig. 3 is being added to the application to support the language in Claims 14 and 20. In addition, the specification has been amended to further support the original description in the claims. It is submitted that no new matter has been added. Accordingly, withdrawal of the drawing objections is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, for failing to recite method steps. As a result, independent Claim 1 has been amended to recite particular steps in the method. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections based on 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, is respectfully requested.

It is noted that Claims 1-8 have not been rejected over the art of record. According, an indication of allowance with respect to Claim 1-8 is respectfully requested.

Claims 9-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) being anticipated by EP 0 311 828.

A disclosed, non-limiting embodiment of the present invention pertains to a transport belt (1) having coupling elements (11, 12) mounted on its front belt ends (9, 10), and having a closure aid (13) that comprises a plurality of closure aid elements (14, 15) that have attachment members (16, through 21) and, between the latter, tensioning elements (23), the attachment members (16 through 21) being attached or attachable in the region of the belt ends (9, 10) in such a way that the closure aid elements (14, 15) link the belt ends (9, 10), the closure aid (13) being removable from the transport belt (1) after the coupling of the belt ends (9, 10) has been made, wherein the closure aid elements are embodied as lashing straps (14, 15) that, as tensioning elements, each comprise a lashing mechanism (23). These features are defined in independent Claim 9. None of the art of record discloses these patentable features.

As described in the present application at page 4, beginning at line 24, EP 0 311 828 discloses lashing straps, which Applicant concedes are known in the art. However, EP 0 311 828 makes absolutely no mention of a transport belt, but only lashing straps including a lashing mechanism. EP 0 311 828 does not disclose the use of lashing straps in connection with a transport band to draw the ends of a transport band together. Accordingly, Claim 9 is patentable over the EP 0 311 828 reference.

For at least the foregoing reason, it submitted that the transport belt of independent Claim 9, and the claims depending there from, is patentably distinguishable over the applied documents. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections of record and allowance of the application are earnestly solicited.

Should questions arise in connection with this application, or should the examiner believe a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any remaining issue pertaining to this application, the undersigned respectfully requests that she be contacted at the number indicated below.

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Respectfully submitted,



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